



Αποκάλυψη

REVELATION

17:7-13

OUTLINE

- 🕒 Main Point
- 🕒 The Vision
- 🕒 Ten Clues
- 🕒 The Beast From the Bottomless Pit (v. 7-8)
- 🕒 The Seven Heads (v. 9)
- 🕒 The Seven Kings (v. 10)
- 🕒 The Eighth (v. 11)
- 🕒 The Ten Horns (v. 12-13)
- 🕒 Lessons For Us

MAIN POINT

First part of an explanation of the vision of the Woman and the Beast

-  Woman and the Beast are separate entities
-  The Woman is a religious, pagan system that has been behind the great powers of history that have set themselves against God and against His people
-  Has existed in some form and will come back again
-  The Beast is the final form of this anti-God imperial system and will be allied with the Woman for practical purposes as it has done before
-  Other kings will be part of this confederacy with the Beast in an attempt to defeat God

This is a difficult passage

-  There is a lot going on and much speculation which passes for interpretation
-  When Scripture gives an interpretation, we do not need to find another one
-  People are often confused by **Revelation** because they have not studied the Old Testament in its entirety
-  Made more difficult by “muddled waters” in popular Christian eschatological circles

Understand the War Against God throughout history

-  May strike us as strange, but Satan has been fighting this whole time, and has used political powers before
-  Just because Satan was defeated at the Cross and the Resurrection does not mean he suddenly gave up
-  Does this change our perspective on Biblical history or the history of the Near-East and Mediterranean?

THE VISION



TEN CLUES

- 🕒 A prostitute and unfaithful to God
- 🕒 Universal influence
- 🕒 Rides (guides or steers) the First Beast
- 🕒 Enormous wealth as shown by her apparel
- 🕒 Expensive cup, but a counterfeit given what it is filled with
- 🕒 Name “Babylon” links her with the original Babel under Nimrod
- 🕒 MOTHER of prostitutes; a fountainhead of idolatry which gives birth to more like her
- 🕒 Persecutes true believers and followers of Christ (goes back before the church, incidentally)
- 🕒 Built on seven hills
- 🕒 A powerful city that rules over the Earth

THE BEAST FROM THE BOTTOMLESS PIT (V. 7-8)

👤 John is confused

- 👤 Rhetorically asked if he understood
- 👤 Mystery is revealed
 - 👤 One mystery here, not two
- 👤 Two figured, but *mysterion* is singular and the two are linked to one another

👤 Beast from **Chapter 11** and **13**, but with added detail

- 👤 Both a kingdom/empire that is being worked by Satan at a point in time, and the ruler of that political entity
 - 👤 Allows for a “gap” or absence of a ruler for a time while keeping continuity with the whole
 - 👤 Avoids overly-mystical interpretations based on sparse evidence (e.g., identification of Judas with the Ruler)
- 👤 From the pit and into perdition
 - 👤 The wound that was healed and his eventual destination in the Lake of Fire; “not” referring to the death (Thomas v2, p. 292)
 - 👤 Being viewed by John as a future event, otherwise its inclusion with the Final Bowl and placed right before the return of Christ would not make sense (Thomas v2, p. 293)
 - 👤 Speculation that when he ascends again he will not have a pure human form, but a partly demonic form (Beckwith via Thomas v2, p. 294) given that he comes from the pit
- 👤 Seems to align with **Revelation 13:3**
 - 👤 Death
 - 👤 Miraculous recovery
 - 👤 Proof of power and his mandate

THE SEVEN HEADS (V. 9)

Seven Heads

-  **Hypothesis 1:** Seven literal Roman Emperors. This is very narrow and restricts the view to Roman Empire instead of the global nature this requires. The heads also pertain to the Beast, not the woman, a point that is often conflated. It is also hard to get seven emperors at the time of John, regardless of the numbering in use.
-  **Hypothesis 2:** Seven kings. The view is that these are seven otherwise unspecified kings; nothing in the text to indicate this.
-  **Hypothesis 3:** The Seven Hills of Rome. Rome does lie on seven literal hills, but it is clear that the Beast has power beyond a single city. It also gives a double meaning to the hills as both political and geographic. Recall that there is a difference between the Woman and the Beast; the Beast here is a political power and the Woman is the religious power. She has influence over them with a false religious system, but does not directly rule *per se* as also seen in the “beside” the waters (v. 1, 15) (Seiss, Ladd, Lenski via Thomas v2, p. 296-7)
-  **Hypothesis 4:** Seven successive empires. Aligns with the traditional use of mountains/hills in Scripture (e.g. **Psalm 30:7; 68:15-16; Isaiah 2:2; 41:15; Jeremiah 51:25; Daniel 2:35; Habakkuk 3:6, 10; Zechariah 4:7**). And this aligns with the position of the Woman relative to those empires. The heads are thus the rulers (the “heads”) of those empires. This also has a double meaning, which weakens it, but one meaning (the hills as kingdoms) is already well established in Scripture, and the call “the mind which has wisdom” may reference the need to understand the unusual use of a double meaning in prophecy (Thomas v2, p. 296)

THE SEVEN KINGS (V. 10)

🏰 Seven Kings

- 🏰 **Hypothesis 1:** Things that go against God generally speaking. Seven represents completeness, this is anything against God. But then how are five fallen? Would that then mean that righteousness is increasing? A symbolic interpretation like this causes more problems than it solves.
- 🏰 **Hypothesis 2:** Seven Roman Emperors. Where to start counting (Caesar or Augustus); who is excluded (e.g. Galba or Otho)? No matter how you count, there is no good answer.
- 🏰 **Hypothesis 3:** Seven kingdoms. Aligns with kings and kingdoms being used as one for the other (e.g. **Daniel 7:17, 23**). These are Gentile kingdoms that opposed God and persecuted His people through history. The future empire will be around for a short span of time, but is the final manifestation of the Beast-Empires through history that work for Satan.

Satan's Seven Super-Kingdoms

- **Egypt**
- **Assyria**
- **Babylon**
- **Persia**
- **Greece**

And there are **seven** kings:
five are fallen, and **one** is,
and the other is **not yet come**;
and when he cometh,
he must continue a short space.

- **Rome**
- **Rome II**

THE EIGHTH (V. 11)

There is some hard stuff here

-  The Beast is both one of the heads and an eighth head beyond the seven
-  Have already seen that the Beast and the head are interchangeable with one another (**Revelation 13:3, 12, 14**)

King or kingdom?

-  The Beast is both a king and the kingdom of that king per **Chapter 13**
-  But what is meant here?
-  A kingdom cannot have a wound unto death, nor can a kingdom come out of the bottomless pit
-  “as one of the seven, the beast is a kingdom, but as an eighth, he is the king of that kingdom who sustains the wound and ascends from the abyss after his wound (cf. v. 8) (Lee). When this occurs, he is king over an eighth kingdom because his reign following his ascent from the abyss will be far more dynamic and dominant than before. This is the sense in which he is one of the seven, but also an eighth.” (Thomas v2, p. 299)
-  Unlike previous rulers in the sequence of empires in this passage, this one dies, goes to hell, and is resurrected and has Satanic powers
 -  Attempts to link “perdition” with Judas (**John 17:12**) are far-fetched and miss the context of the passage
 -  It also does not make sense for John to think of the Nero legend that he would return after his death and that Domitian was the resurrected Nero

THE TEN HORNS (V. 12-13)

Ten Horns

-  Ten specific kings (*basileus*)
-  But kings with no kingdom... yet
 -  Rules out any interpretation of Roman emperors or kings contemporaneous with John
 -  Also does not fit recorded history in any meaningful sense
 -  Can only be eschatological
-  Their kingship will come in conjunction with the rise of the Beast (see also **Daniel 7:7, 24**)
 -  They have their own kingdoms, rise at the time of the Beast, and join him
 -  Not again that there are other political powers on the Earth at this time

Support to the Beast

-  United in their desire to go to war with the Lamb (see **v. 14**)
 -  Recall **Psalm 2:1-3**
 -  This is utter madness, yet they either think they can win, or they are desperate to win and do not think they have a choice

LESSONS FOR US

- 📖 Sometimes a passage is just difficult
 - 📖 Made simpler if you take God at His word, but understanding it can still be hard
 - 📖 Even John “marveled” at this (v. 6)
- 📖 Understand the spiritual dimension to world and historical events
 - 📖 There is and has been a battle going on behind the scenes
 - 📖 Only understanding the physical events gives an incomplete picture
 - 📖 Take the study of history as seriously as we take the study of Scripture
 - 📖 How/why does God work in history (e.g. Acts 17:26)
- 📖 Remember that these things are yet-future
 - 📖 We have a job to do today
 - 📖 Live for God and do things because it is what God commanded you to do
 - 📖 Prophecy is important, but how we live our lives is often a better testimony

